

§ 254.1

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Subpart A—General

§ 254.1 Who must submit a spill-response plan?

(a) If you are the owner or operator of an oil handling, storage, or transportation facility, and it is located seaward of the coast line, you must submit a spill-response plan to MMS for approval. Your spill-response plan must demonstrate that you can respond quickly and effectively whenever oil is discharged from your facility. Refer to §254.6 for the definitions of “oil,” “facility,” and “coast line” if you have any doubts about whether to submit a plan.

(b) You must maintain a current response plan for an abandoned facility until you physically remove or dismantle the facility or until the Regional Supervisor notifies you in writing that a plan is no longer required.

(c) Owners or operators of offshore pipelines carrying essentially dry gas do not need to submit a plan. You must, however, submit a plan for a pipeline that carries:

- (1) Oil;
- (2) Condensate that has been injected into the pipeline; or
- (3) Gas and naturally occurring condensate.

(d) If you are in doubt as to whether you must submit a plan for an offshore facility or pipeline, you should check with the Regional Supervisor.

(e) If your facility is located landward of the coast line, but you believe your facility is sufficiently similar to OCS facilities that it should be regulated by MMS, you may contact the Regional Supervisor, offer to accept MMS jurisdiction over your facility, and request that MMS seek from the agency with jurisdiction over your facility a relinquishment of that jurisdiction.

§ 254.2 When must I submit a response plan?

(a) You must submit, and MMS must approve, a response plan that covers each facility located seaward of the coast line before you may use that facility. To continue operations, you must operate the facility in compliance with the plan.

(b) Despite the provisions of paragraph (a) of this section, you may operate your facility after you submit your plan while MMS reviews it for approval. To operate a facility without an approved plan, you must certify in writing to the Regional Supervisor that you have the capability to respond, to the maximum extent practicable, to a worst case discharge or a substantial threat of such a discharge. The certification must show that you have ensured by contract, or other means approved by the Regional Supervisor, the availability of private personnel and equipment necessary to respond to the discharge. Verification from the organization(s) providing the personnel and equipment must accompany the certification. MMS will not allow you to operate a facility for more than 2 years without an approved plan.

(c) If you have a plan that MMS already approved, you are not required to immediately rewrite the plan to comply with this part. You must, however, submit the information this regulation requires when submitting your first plan revision (see §254.30) after the effective date of this rule. The Regional Supervisor may extend this deadline upon request.

§ 254.3 May I cover more than one facility in my response plan?

(a) Your response plan may be for a single lease or facility or a group of

leases or facilities. All the leases or facilities in your plan must have the same owner or operator (including affiliates) and must be located in the same MMS Region (see definition of Regional Response Plan in § 254.6).

(b) Regional Response Plans must address all the elements required for a response plan in Subpart B, *Oil Spill Response Plans for Outer Continental Shelf Facilities*, or Subpart D, *Oil Spill Response Requirements for Facilities Located in State Waters Seaward of the Coast Line*, as appropriate.

(c) When developing a Regional Response Plan, you may group leases or facilities subject to the approval of the Regional Supervisor for the purposes of:

- (1) Calculating response times;
- (2) Determining quantities of response equipment;
- (3) Conducting oil-spill trajectory analyses;
- (4) Determining worst case discharge scenarios; and
- (5) Identifying areas of special economic and environmental importance that may be impacted and the strategies for their protection.

(d) The Regional Supervisor may specify how to address the elements of a Regional Response Plan. The Regional Supervisor also may require that Regional Response Plans contain additional information if necessary for compliance with appropriate laws and regulations.

§ 254.4 May I reference other documents in my response plan?

You may reference information contained in other readily accessible documents in your response plan. Examples of documents that you may reference are the National Contingency Plan (NCP), Area Contingency Plan (ACP), MMS environmental documents, and Oil Spill Removal Organization (OSRO) documents that are readily accessible to the Regional Supervisor. You must ensure that the Regional Supervisor possesses or is provided with copies of all OSRO documents you reference. You should contact the Regional Supervisor if you want to know whether a reference is acceptable.

§ 254.5 General response plan requirements.

(a) The response plan must provide for response to an oil spill from the facility. You must immediately carry out the provisions of the plan whenever there is a release of oil from the facility. You must also carry out the training, equipment testing, and periodic drills described in the plan, and these measures must be sufficient to ensure the safety of the facility and to mitigate or prevent a discharge or a substantial threat of a discharge.

(b) The plan must be consistent with the National Contingency Plan and the appropriate Area Contingency Plan(s).

(c) Nothing in this part relieves you from taking all appropriate actions necessary to immediately abate the source of a spill and remove any spills of oil.

(d) In addition to the requirements listed in this part, you must provide any other information the Regional Supervisor requires for compliance with appropriate laws and regulations.

§ 254.6 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part:

Adverse weather conditions means weather conditions found in the operating area that make it difficult for response equipment and personnel to clean up or remove spilled oil or hazardous substances. These include, but are not limited to: Fog, inhospitable water and air temperatures, wind, sea ice, current, and sea states. It does not refer to conditions such as a hurricane, under which it would be dangerous or impossible to respond to a spill.

Area Contingency Plan means an Area Contingency Plan prepared and published under section 311(j) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA).

Coast line means the line of ordinary low water along that portion of the coast which is in direct contact with the open sea and the line marking the seaward limit of inland waters.

Discharge means any emission (other than natural seepage), intentional or unintentional, and includes, but is not limited to, spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, or dumping.